**UQ Summer Research Project Description - 2026**

*Please use this template to create a description of each research project, eligibility requirements and expected deliverables. Project details can then be uploaded to each faculty, school, institute, and centre webpage prior to the launch of the program.*

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| **Project title:** | **Defining Trauma: A cross-disciplinary review of the literature** |
| **Hours of engagement & delivery mode** | Hours of engagement: 6 weeks, 20-25 hours per weekDelivery mode: Hybrid. While many tasks for this project can be done remotely, there will be some face-to-face meetings required. The project also involves working with databases accessed through the UQ Library, so strong and reliable internet access is essential. |
| **Description:** | In recent years, there has been a marked increase in public and professional awareness of psychological trauma and its potential impacts, with terms such as *trauma*, *complex trauma*, PTSD, complex PTSD, *intergenerational trauma, and “Big T/little t” trauma* becoming part of everyday discourse. However, the different meanings and therefore the utility of such terms is often unclear, leading to inconsistencies and communication challenges across health professionals. This project aims to undertake a cross-disciplinary systematic review of how trauma concepts are defined within a) academic literature across psychology and other related fields, and b) grey literature and associated professional bodies. Understanding these definitional differences is crucial, as they shape how trauma is studied, interpreted, and addressed in practice. As a summer scholar, you will assist in conducting the systematic review using relevant academic databases, helping to map and analyse the conceptual landscape of trauma across disciplines.You will be working with another student and academics from Psychology and Social Work.  |
| **Expected learning outcomes and deliverables:** | As a summer scholar on this project, you will gain hands-on experience in conducting a systematic review—a key research method in evidence-based practice. You will develop skills in academic database searching, screening and selecting relevant literature, and extracting and synthesizing data. You’ll also deepen your understanding of how complex psychological concepts like trauma are defined and operationalised across different health disciplines.Your main tasks will include: * Conducting searches using academic health related databases.
* Screening articles for inclusion based on predefined criteria.
* Extracting and organising data related to definitions and conceptualisations of trauma.

This project offers a valuable opportunity to build research skills, engage with interdisciplinary literature, and contribute to a timely and important area of inquiry in mental health and trauma studies*.* |
| **Suitable for:** | * UQ enrolled from HMBS faculty and completed at least part of third 3rd year or higher (including Masters and PHD).
* Basic familiarity with academic databases (e.g., PubMed, PsycINFO).
* Willingness to engage with complex and sometimes contested ideas.
* Strong attention to detail, particularly in reading and interpreting academic literature.
* Interest in health related and psychological concepts, especially around trauma.
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| **Primary Supervisor:** | Dr Fiona Maccallum |
| **Further info:** | f.maccallum@uq.edu.auPlease get in touch with me prior to submitting your application. |